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The Idol



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Chapter 1 by ArchAngel

Her cabin door handle rattled. Climbing out of bed, she grabbed a silk robe, "Hello?" There was no response. Pulling the door open, she peered out. It was still dark, but in the lamp light she saw wet splayed footprints leading from her door to the railing at the side. She shuddered, relocked the door securely and climbed back into bed.

Her luxury cruise on the Emerald Queen in the South Pacific was both for business and pleasure. The pleasure was the spa, gym, 2 pools and hot tub, a theatre, restaurants and the exotic islands. The business was the casino and wealthy patrons needing help emptying their overstuffed bank accounts. She was living the dream.

She turned restlessly on her bed. She should never have stolen that idol, what had possessed her? On a visit to Malakula, a local had offered to row her to a small island for thirty dollars to escape the tourists. It wasn't on the maps and for 3 hours she'd have a white sand beach to herself. After an hour sunbathing, she decided to explore and walk round the island's perimeter. On the other side, she found a small shrine, that was really just a dilapidated hut. Inside, the bloody remains of a scrawny rooster lay in front of an ugly idol on a wooden block. The idol was

small, but bigger than her fist. It was probably worth a lot to a collector, so she had stuffed it in her beach bag and made her way back to the ship under a warm sun, before returning to Malakula and the cruise ship. She should never let the idol stay there.

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Chapter 2 by Vanilla



Now she feared. She had a hunch, but she shrugged it off. She'd thought that the idol was haunted. But, now it felt that someone else was haunting the idol. More scary. Had someone seen her? Well, she wasn't stealing. She had made a genuine discovery. Someone would just be jealous.

Jealous! No!

She had heard many stories of people committing gruesome crimes for greed and lust. She should be careful.

Just then, the door burst open.

Chapter 3 by ArchAngel



A man staggered in, hanging onto the door for support. A glass of red wine in his hand spilt onto the carpet. He slurred, in a Texan drawl, "Steph, where have you been? You're missing the party."

She recognised him instantly, he was one of the regulars in the Casino. "Travis, what the hell do you think you're doing? You just scared me half to death."

"Aw, I'm sorry, we were just missing you." He realised she was in bed and took a lurching step backwards. "I had no idea you were having an early night, forgive my manners."

"No, it's okay, I've been having a hard time sleeping anyway, I think a bit of company would do me some good. I'll meet you upstairs in ten minutes."

For the next couple of hours she socialised with the group in the bar, it helped take her mind off those strange wet footprints. Gradually they all said their goodnights and went to bed. Travis was slumped forward onto a table snoring gently. She carefully reached into his pocket and found the key fob for his cabin, then slipped out of the bar and down the stairs.

Checking about to make sure she wasn't seen, Steph entered his cabin and quietly pushed the door up behind her. Travis had told everyone he carried a 'Glock 19' whenever he travelled, for protection, well, right now she was the one needing protection. She found the handgun under

his socks in a drawer. It felt lighter than she expected, but had a full magazine.

She sneaked back up to the bar and hid the key in his pocket before heading back to her own cabin, feeling a lot safer.

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